

1560/574

*Yes*

A  
S E R M O N,  
ON THE DEATH OF THE LATE  
REV. HABAKKUK CRABB,  
BY SAMUEL PALMER.  
WITH THE  
FUNERAL ORATION,  
BY ROBERT HALL, M. A.  
AND  
A N E L E G Y,  
BY J. T. R.

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[ PRICE ONE SHILLING. ]

1795





THE FRIEND OF JESUS.

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A

S E R M O N,

PREACHED AT

ROYSTON, JANUARY 4, 1795,

ON THE MUCH-LAMENTED DEATH OF

THE REV. HABAKKUK CRABB,

WHO DIED DECEMBER 25, 1794, AGED FORTY-FIVE.

BY SAMUEL PALMER.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

THE FUNERAL ORATION,

BY ROBERT HALL.

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Published at the Request of the Congregation.

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*But thou hast fully known my Doctrine, Manner of Life, Purpose,  
Faith, Long-Suffering, Charity, Patience—Afflictions which came  
unto me—but out of them all the Lord delivered me. 2 Tim. iii. 10.*

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1560/574.





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A  
S E R M O N, &c.

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JOHN XI. 11.

OUR FRIEND LAZARUS SLEEPETH.

THE narrative contained in this chapter, respecting the death of Lazarus, is deeply affecting, but not less pleasing and instructive. It suggests ample matter of meditation suited to a funeral solemnity, especially such an one as the present. The discourse and the behaviour of our blessed Lord, on this melancholy occasion, give us the most exalted ideas of his religion and of his own personal character; and a due attention to both will direct us how to conduct ourselves towards our friends in their afflictions, as well as comfort us under our own.

Our Lord was most tenderly impressed with the death of this excellent person, and with the distress in which his surviving relatives were involved by it. When he came and saw the general lamentation that was made for him, we are told "Jesus groaned in spirit and was troubled." And when he was conducted to the grave of the deceased, it is said, with beautiful conciseness, "Jesus wept." Herein he hath shewn us, that it is not inconsistent with the character of the Christian to discover the feelings of the man; and that his religion doth not suppress the affections of nature, though it is calculated to regulate them. We may drop a tear over the  
graves

graves of those whom we loved, while we "sorrow not as those that are without hope." From the tender sympathy of our Saviour, in this instance, with his mourning friends, and especially from the divine consolation which he imparted to them, we discover the grace and compassion of his heart, and are encouraged, both living and dying, to confide in his friendship; at the same time that we learn how to "weep with them that weep," and to pour the balm of consolation into the wounded heart.

From this part of sacred story we likewise gather pleasing and useful information concerning the little Christian family to which it relates. It consisted of a brother and two sisters, who lived in easy circumstances, at *Bethany*, a village within two miles of Jerusalem. They were persons of amiable dispositions and exemplary deportment; strongly united by the bonds of faith and love; and they had a special share in the esteem and friendship of the blessed Jesus. It is said, verse 5, "Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus." With regard to the two female members of the family, we find that they were not only professed disciples of Christ, but that they discovered a lively faith in him, and a strong affection for him. Martha, the elder of them, when she first received him into her house, shewed her high respect to this heavenly visiter by the ample provision she made for his entertainment, though he saw reason to give her a word of reproof for using too much ceremony, and being too much encumbered by domestic cares. The other he highly commended, as having "chosen the good part," in attending to his instructions. Both of them, on occasion of their brother's sickness and death, discovered in a strong degree, that affection which ought ever to subsist between members of the same family. They moreover manifested, in their discourse with our Saviour, in his visit to them on the present mournful occasion, that faith in his power and compassion which their intimate knowledge of him encouraged.

But



But I am now more particularly to direct your attention to the Character of LAZARUS, whom Jesus honoured by styling him "OUR FRIEND." After the illustration of which character, I shall represent to you the pleasing view which he gives of his death, under the image of a SLEEP. I shall then apply the subject to the present affecting occasion.

I. Let us contemplate the Character of Lazarus, as expressed in the endeared terms in which our Saviour here speaks of him, "Our friend Lazarus."

It appears from some circumstances mentioned in this chapter, that his general temper was amiable and his deportment friendly. In the village where he resided, and the adjacent parts, he seems to have had many friends, and to have been upon amicable terms with his neighbours in general, though of a different religious persuasion from his own: for we find that many of the *Jews* (who were by no means partial to the Christians) when they heard of his death, came to visit his sisters, and to "comfort them concerning their brother;" and when Jesus arrived at the house, it is said, he found some of them "weeping." Such deep and general lamentation at any one's death, is a striking proof how much he was respected and beloved while he lived. Lazarus, we may justly suppose, was, as every Christian ought to be, the friend of all men.

But when our Lord, speaking of him to his disciples, styles him "OUR friend;" we must understand him as referring to the special friendship which subsisted between *him* and *them*. He was the friend of Jesus, and of his disciples. A character of peculiar worth and dignity.

1. He was the friend of JESUS. He was a sincere believer in him, being convinced upon solid evidence that he was "the Christ, the Son of the living God." And the faith he possessed he was not afraid or ashamed to profess to the world. Though in that day the followers of Jesus were exposed to reproach and suffering; and Lazarus, from the

style

style in which he seems to have lived, had much to lose, he cheerfully risked all for the sake of Christ and the gospel. He boldly "confessed Christ before men," and before his enemies. His attachment was not only sincere but ardent, and his zeal warm in his master's cause. He shewed that it was so, not in words but in deeds. This appears from the circumstance of his receiving him into his house, and entertaining him with so much hospitality, when he was so generally "despised and rejected of men," and a connexion with him was so reproachful and hazardous. Nor can it be questioned whether he did not in every other way testify his warm affection to his master, and his zeal in promoting his cause in the world. In short, as a friend of Jesus, we may naturally suppose that he imbibed much of the temper and spirit of Jesus—his meekness, his humility, his love and benevolence—his disinterested concern for the happiness of all around him.

All this may be inferred from the peculiar affection which our blessed Lord discovered towards *him*: for such as these were the only characters he distinguished by the peculiar marks of his friendship. That Lazarus was thus highly honoured, may be inferred from our Saviour's making such frequent visits at the house where he lived. And several circumstances mentioned in this chapter are striking proofs of the fact. It is strongly expressed in the message sent to our Lord by his sisters, when he was first taken ill: "Lord, he whom *thou lovest* is sick." And the message seems to imply, that such notice of his affliction was all that was necessary to procure a visit from him. His delaying to go immediately was no proof of indifference, but, as it afterwards appeared, of peculiar kindness. The manner in which Jesus spoke to the disciples concerning his death, when he received the account of it, intimating to them his purpose to go to Bethany, and his actual going thither, though near thirty miles distant, "to awake him out of sleep," and that at a time when he  
had



had much to apprehend from the malevolence of the Jews, furnish evident proofs of a peculiar friendship. As likewise did the address of one of the sorrowful sisters of the deceased to our Saviour when he came: "Lord if thou  
" hadst been here my brother had not died." q. d. ' I know  
" thy friendship for him was such, as would have prevented  
" his death, and restored him to health.' A further, and yet more striking proof of the strong affection of Jesus towards Lazarus was, the tender emotion which he discovered on approaching the grave; which was such as to occasion the Jews who stood by to remark, " Behold how he *loved* him!" But Lazarus was not only the friend of Jesus; we are further to observe,

2. He was the friend of the DISCIPLES also. Our Lord, when informing them of his death, styles him not MY friend, but OUR friend: yours as well as mine. ' Our  
" friend Lazarus is gone! that worthy and amiable man,  
" whom we all so much esteemed, and in whom we found so  
" sincere and warm a friendship; with whom we have had  
" so intimate a connexion, and enjoyed such frequent delightful  
" intercourse; who has so often received us at his hospitable  
" mansion, and shewn us so many instances of kindness.'

The intimate connexion of Lazarus with Jesus himself naturally led him into an acquaintance with his disciples, whom their master called and treated as his friends and brethren; to whom favour shewn by any was considered as shewn to himself. Lazarus esteemed and kindly treated them for their master's sake; and after repeated interviews for their own sake.

And the disciples appear to have entertained the same idea of his worth that their master did, and expressed the same tender affection for him. While they only supposed, from our Lord's gentle manner of speaking, that Lazarus was *sick*, and that he had got some natural "rest by sleep," they expressed

expressed their pleasing hope that he might recover. "If he sleep he may do well." Had that proved the case, how would it have rejoiced their hearts? But when Jesus plainly told them, "Lazarus is DEAD," Thomas cried out, in a sudden transport of grief, v. 16. "Let us also go that we may die with him\*." The bond of friendship was so strong between them, that the unexpected news of his death was insupportable, and under the first impulse of natural affection, life itself seemed undesirable after having lost so dear a friend: one who was so warmly attached to their interests, one who had so ardent a zeal for the common cause, and who possessed such singular ability to promote it.

Lazarus appears to have been one of those "GOOD men," those *benevolent* persons (as the term signifies) for whom the apostle says, "some would even dare to die," and in whose society death itself would lose its terrors. Doubtless this disciple, when he uttered this affectionate speech, had his thoughts directed to that better world whither he supposed his departed friend was gone, and where he hoped to enjoy an everlasting society with him, in the region of holy and happy spirits.—'Is Lazarus gone? Let my soul be with his!'

In addition to what has been said on the character of this excellent person, it may be proper to observe, that from several circumstances, which might be mentioned†, there is reason to believe that Lazarus was a YOUNG man; in the

\* Some suppose that this refers to *Christ* himself, whose life the apostles thought to be in danger from the Jews. I rather think, with others, that it refers to *Lazarus*, for reasons not necessary to be here mentioned. See, in confirmation of this, Mr. Howe's Funeral Sermon, for Dr. Bates, upon ver. 16. And another by Dr. STENNETT.

† See Doddridge on the place. Also his funeral sermon for Dr. Clark.



prime and vigour of his days : a consideration which, as it rendered his death the more afflictive, gave additional lustre to the virtues of his character. We proceed,

II. To consider the pleasing representation which our Lord gives of his death, under the image of SLEEP. " Our friend Lazarus *sleepeth*."

By this metaphorical expression Jesus meant to inform his disciples of the intelligence he had received, concerning the death of their friend, in a way the least likely to shock their feelings. But they not fully understanding his meaning, it was necessary for him to explain his language as importing the sleep of death. " Lazarus is dead !" How solemn the sound ! How unexpected, how surprising the news ! that one so amiable and so useful should be torn from their society, and that at so early a period ! The case however was by no means uncommon. Excellence of character secures none from sickness or death, in any situation, or at any period. The wise and the good are not exempted from the sentence of mortality which sin has passed upon all men. The friends of Jesus must die as well as others, and sometimes such are called hence at a seemingly premature period.

But the change made upon them, when taken out of this life, is not so properly called by the name of *death*, as that of *sleep*. There can be no doubt that Lazarus was really dead. He had been so long buried that, when Jesus ordered the stone to be removed from his grave, one of his sisters despairing of his revival, expressed her strong persuasion that his body was putrified. Our Lord therefore, in using this mode of speech, did it not merely with reference to his speedy resurrection ; as in the case of Jairus's daughter, of whom, though really deceased, he said, " she is not dead but " *sleepeth* ;" but it is a representation of death which is common to the pious dead in general. The apostle to the Corinthians, speaks of the deceased witnesses of Christ's resurrection as having " fallen asleep ;" and to the Thessalo-

nians, of their departed friends, as "sleeping in Jesus." A natural and pleasing emblem. The state of the body, taking the repose of nature by night on the bed, is a beautiful representation of the state of the Christian when taken out of this life, and his body reposed in the grave. He is not so properly dead as gone to sleep.

Some extend this sleep to the *soul*. Much may be said in favour of that hypothesis, which all appearances strongly countenance. But several passages of scripture seem to me to require great violence to be reconciled to it\*. That however is a controversy into which I shall not now enter. I shall only offer a few thoughts to shew the propriety of the emblem of sleep to represent the state of the pious dead.

It suggests some things which to surviving friends and relatives are deeply affecting and distressing. When death has seized upon them that were dear to us, they are, like persons in a profound sleep, no longer capable of the pleasures or the employments of the present state; of receiving or administering any acts of friendship. "There is no work nor knowledge nor device in the grave: they know nothing of all that is done under the sun." We can no longer hold any delightful converse with them, nor enjoy any of the advantages we used to experience from their society. "The tongue that talked of wisdom, the lips that fed many," are become silent. The voice of the charmer that charmed most wisely can be heard no more. The most eloquent preacher, who had "the tongue of the learned, and knew how to speak a word in season" to every hearer, is struck for ever dumb.

But though many such gloomy ideas as these will naturally arise in our minds when we think of our friends sleeping in the dust, the emblem is adapted and designed to convey others which are truly pleasing and delightful.

\* See particularly Luke xxiii. 43. 2 Cor. v. 8. Phil. i. 23.



1. The first which occurs is that of perfect REST: an entire freedom from the anxious cares, the painful labours, and the heavy sorrows of life. "Sleep, says Solomon, to the labouring man is sweet:" weary with the toils, and disquieted with the troubles of the day, he is glad to lay himself down upon his bed at night, and rest, insensible to all that has fatigued his body or disturbed his mind. So the Christian, when that "night cometh in which no man can work," is happily released from all the labours, sufferings, and cares with which he was exercised through life's tedious day, and from the remembrance of them. The grave is to the friends of Jesus a bed of rest; a place of sweet repose. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours." All the painful services of this wearisome state are for ever at an end.—The body shall no more be subject to toil, nor any of its limbs to the pain of laborious exertion. Nor shall it feel any longer either the acute disorders, or the uncomfortable weaknesses, with which it is now often exercised. The inhabitants of the grave "shall no more say I am sick, nor shall there be any more pain." The mind also enjoys a perfect rest from the cares and anxieties of life, which are often more afflictive, especially to persons of tender feelings, than the pains of bodily disorder. They shall no more know an anxious thought about their personal or domestic concerns; they shall no longer be conscious to the heart-felt grief occasioned by the unkindness or indiscretion of friends, or the malice of enemies. "There" (as Job beautifully describes that land of peace and silence) "there the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest. There the prisoners rest together, and hear not the voice of the oppressor."

There the Christian's quiet slumbers are undisturbed by painful doubts and alarming fears, respecting either divine truth, or his own spiritual state; by the assaults of temptation, or the burden of sin; by the fierce conflict between the  
flesh

flesh and the spirit, or by the sharp pangs of evangelical repentance: these "former things are done away."—And with these personal sorrows, those likewise of a relative kind shall there for ever cease. Their hearts are no more pierced by the sufferings or the sins of others. Not the affliction or death of a tender relative shall any more distress them; nor, can the most painful of all evils, the impiety of a beloved child ever vex their righteous souls: they no longer "behold transgressors and are grieved;" nor do they feel the anguish they have often felt from the want of success in their attempts to reform and save them. Neither are they disturbed by any of the tumults and miseries which happen in this tempestuous region. Whatever dire calamities take place in their own families, in the world, or in the church, which when here would have pained them to the heart, the noise thereof cannot reach them *there*: there, like persons in a profound sleep, they lie utterly insensible to all that passes around them; nor does the terror of a dream, or a dismal vision of the night ever interrupt their repose.—O! blessed state of quiet and tranquillity! With reference to which may it be often justly said, even separate from the idea of a future happy existence, "Better are the dead that are already dead, than the living that are yet alive." They have now obtained what many an one has ardently fought, who in the bitterness of their souls exclaimed with the Psalmist, "O that I had wings like a dove, that I might fly away and be at rest!"

But, blessed be God, the repose of the *grave* is not the whole of that "rest which remains for his people." And our Saviour's emblem of *sleep* suggests a more delightful idea. For I observe,

2. It leads our thoughts to a glorious morning when his friends shall *awake*, and rise with renewed vigour to an immortal life.

The



The natural rest of sleep, however pleasing, is not a permanent state, it is only temporary and of short duration. He that lies down upon his bed at night, weary with labour, and pain and care, hopes to rise in the morning refreshed both in body and mind, with his various powers invigorated for the services and enjoyments of the succeeding day. When therefore the death of believers is represented under the image of sleep, it naturally suggests to us the pleasing idea of a mere temporary state of insensibility to sorrow, and incapacity for action; and of an approaching period when they shall awake from their slumbers, and rise again with renewed powers for activity and enjoyment.

This is the plain express doctrine of divine revelation. It was not wholly unknown under the old testament dispensation. *David* in this blessed prospect said, "My flesh also shall rest "in hope." And the prophet *Daniel* taught that "they "that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake: some to "everlasting life." But in the new testament, this joyful hope is abundantly confirmed, and various circumstances are there revealed which brighten the prospect. The sorrowful kindred of *Lazarus* believed the doctrine of a final resurrection previous to what our Saviour now spake concerning it. "I know," says *Martha*, "that he shall rise again in the "resurrection at the last day." Upon which Jesus asserted his own power, not only to restore their brother, but to raise all the dead from their graves. "I, says he, am the "resurrection and the life, he that believeth in me though "he were dead yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and "believeth in me, shall never die." Hereupon, he quickly proved the authority he claimed over the territories of death, by recalling his friend from thence. "With a loud voice "he cried, *Lazarus come forth*. And he that was dead immediately came forth," in perfect health and vigour.

But the most glorious confirmation of the Redeemer's power to raise the dead, and to fulfil the promises he had delivered

delivered of an immortal life, was his *own* resurrection. This incontestible fact is the grand evidence of his divine mission, and the principal foundation of our hope in him. "Christ being raised from the dead is become the first fruits of them that slept." "Blessed," therefore says the apostle Peter, "be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath begotten us again to a new and lively hope, by the resurrection of his Son from the dead." This was the pledge and the pattern of the final resurrection of all his followers to life and glory everlasting. At that great day "when he shall come in his glory and the glory of his Father, the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised." The voice that called Lazarus from his grave shall awake all the sleeping inhabitants of the earth to hear their doom. But "the dead in Christ shall rise first." And O! with what transport will they awake from their slumbers, to feel themselves refreshed and invigorated; their capacities renewed and enlarged, so as to fit them for the pleasures and employments of a new and better life! With what extacy will they perceive themselves completely free from all the imperfections of this mortal state, both natural and moral, and at once transformed into the image of their glorified Saviour! for we are assured, "he will then change their vile bodies, and fashion them like unto his own glorious body."

And, O glorious thought! at that day they that sleep in Jesus shall awake to sleep no more. In the morning of the resurrection they shall rise to spend an eternal day in that region of life and light, of which it is said, "there is no night there." There "mortality shall be swallowed up of life:" a life truly worthy the name, as misery shall be for ever banished, and enjoyment shall be unmingled, perfect and durable: a life consisting of every social as well as every personal delight, in the immediate presence of God the fountain of blessedness, where death shall be extirpated, and the fear of it for ever banished.

Let



Let us now improve the subject by such Reflections as most naturally result from it.

1. In the character of Lazarus we see a pattern worthy of our imitation. It is one great excellence of the Bible that it exhibits so many biographical anecdotes of ancient worthies. These were written "as ensamples for us" to follow. Let us, when we peruse the memoirs of holy men of old, endeavour to imbibe their spirit and tread in their steps. What character can we conceive more venerable and lovely than that which we have now been contemplating? Let us all be ambitious that it may be ours.

Let us approve ourselves the friends of *Christ*. Such the *ministers* of the gospel more especially are, by the nature of their office, required to be. As such they are under indispensable obligations to "preach, not themselves, but Christ" "Jesus the Lord, and themselves your servants for Jesus" "sake." But let it be remembered, the character is implied in a Christian profession. To be a Christian, and not a friend of Christ is a solecism. Let us all, whether in a public or private station, while we bear the name of Christ and profess his religion, manifest that we are his "disciples," his friends "INDEED." All real friendship is founded in knowledge, and cordial esteem. Nor can we be the true friends of Jesus without either. Let us cultivate the right knowledge of Christ, and be solicitous, with the apostle, that we "may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and" "the fellowship of his sufferings, and be made conformable" "to" him in his life and "death." Let us "love the" "Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," and shew that we do so—by attending all his institutions—by maintaining all his truths—by espousing his cause in the world—by promoting his honour, seeking not our "own things" but "the things of" "Jesus Christ"—by imbibing his spirit—by treading in his steps—and by doing his whole will. Without this, our warmest professions of faith in him and love to him will be  
vain,

vain, and we shall be justly denominated *enemies* of Christ and his cross. "Then, says he, are ye *my friends* if ye do "whatsoever I have commanded you."

Let us also shew ourselves the friends of the *disciples* of Christ. This is one of the most important proofs of our friendship to Christ himself. Between these two there is an inseparable connexion. The one will naturally produce the other. The true friends of Jesus will love his image wherever they behold it, and will be ready to shew respect and kindness to his disciples for their master's sake. And he himself has delivered it as his new command, and as a necessary proof of our love to him, "that we love one another." Let us then "love one another with a pure heart fervently, "and let brotherly-love continue. Let us, as we have opportunity, do good to all men, but especially to them "who are of the household of faith."

2. From the example of Christ, in the history before us, we may learn how to form and regulate our special friendships.

It has been urged as an objection to Christianity, that the duties of friendship are excluded from the system. Some who have admitted the fact, have attempted to justify it, on the ground of the superior excellence of that universal benevolence which the gospel enjoins, in which all private distinctions are swallowed up\*. But both the objection and the defence, I apprehend, are founded upon a palpable mistake. Christianity, it is true, does inculcate upon its professors the love of all mankind; but not to the exclusion of particular friendships. On the contrary, these are not merely allowed, but virtually recommended, in various passages of scripture, and especially in the example of our master himself. Though he exercised good will to all men, he discovered a peculiar attachment to his disciples who were his chosen companions, an whom he "called friends." And even among *these*,

\* See Soame Jennyns's Essays.



there were a few whom he honoured above the rest, with a peculiar share of his confidence and esteem. Such was *John*, who was characterized as "the disciple whom Jesus loved." And such, as we have now seen, was *Lazarus*. Since then Jesus had his particular friends, we may lawfully and laudably have ours. Let us be wise in the choice of them, and attentive to the duties we owe them. In this respect, as in all others, let the conduct of our Master be our guide. Let us make them our chosen friends and most intimate associates, who best approve themselves the friends of Christ; who discover most of his meek, humble, peaceable, benevolent temper. And let us manifest towards such the same kindness, beneficence, and fidelity he did. Let us be ready to visit them in their afflictions as well as in their prosperity; to sympathize with them and comfort them when they mourn, and to shew our affectionate remembrance of them when they are dead.

3. The present subject suggests ample *encouragement* to the practice of genuine Christianity. The character of *Lazarus* recommended him to general esteem, and procured him the most substantial honour. He might possibly have enemies, but he had more friends, and they did him signal honour, both living and dying. His amiable temper and exemplary deportment rendered him respectable among his neighbours in general, and when he died the whole village lamented, and many came to condole with his mourning relatives. The disciples of Christ held him in the highest estimation, and when they heard of his death, they were almost ready to die with him. But his highest honour and felicity was, that he had a peculiar interest in the friendship of Jesus, both in his life and at his death; in so much that he wept at his grave, and exerted his miraculous power to restore him to life.

In cultivating the same temper and pursuing the same course, we may reasonably expect similar honours and ad-

vantages. The best of men may indeed have enemies, especially in times of general suspicion and tumult; but they will chiefly be among the worst of mankind, whose favour is scarcely worth a wish; though even *they* will often really revere those whom they most oppose and vilify. But the friendship of the wise and good is sure to attend those whose tempers and lives are eminently conformable to the gospel and the character of Christ. They will be respected while they live, and more generally lamented when they die.

This you have seen verified in the case of my worthy friend and brother, whose death you have requested me to assist you in improving. I doubt not but you have anticipated me in the application of the character I have been describing, to your deceased pastor. After what I have said of Lazarus, as the friend of Jesus and his disciples, I need only to add—such was he. He appeared eminently to have imbibed the spirit of that Master whom he served, and his general deportment as a Christian and a minister, was such as did honour to his character, and secured him the friendship of most that knew him, who were proper judges of true excellence. You of this society who best understood his worth, I know “esteemed him highly in love for his work’s sake.” Your kindness to him, during the short period of his ministry here, I am persuaded rendered the last few years the happiest of his life. You, with many more, have shed the tear of friendship over his grave. At such a grave well may the friends of religion weep. In his death the church of Christ has lost a minister of rare endowments, and you a justly beloved pastor. “For a season,” ah! how short a season! “ye rejoiced in his light.” Well may ye mourn now that light is so suddenly extinguished. In his death you have lost *a friend*—a wise, an affectionate, and a faithful friend. He was a friend of Jesus, whose cause he espoused in an infidel age. He was a friend to “the truth as it is in Jesus,” which he investigated with diligence, impartiality, and humility.



mility. He was a friend to virtue and piety, which he laboured to promote by his doctrine and by his example. He was a friend to your spiritual and everlasting interests. As such you ought, and do lament him, and you will I trust ever be disposed to treat his memory with respect. The greatest respect you can now shew him is, to remember and hold fast the doctrines he taught you, to practise the exhortations he gave you, and to follow the example he set you.

I scarcely need to add, you will cordially unite, with many others, to discover your genuine friendship for the deceased, in the most benevolent exertions for his numerous family, who have lost a friend as well as a father, at a period which renders them peculiar objects of compassion. The children of such a father will never surely be suffered to want.

Let them choose their father's God as their God, and trust in him, and they "shall not want any good thing," for he delights to be known as "a father to the fatherless." Let them approve themselves the friends of Jesus, "seeking first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness," and they may cheerfully confide in the promise he has delivered to such, that, besides all spiritual blessings, all needful earthly good things "shall be added." Pious parents are often rewarded by the peculiar favour of heaven towards their offspring, "The seed of the righteous shall be blessed." It hath often been observed, that Providence has remarkably appeared for the children of pious men and useful ministers, so that numerous families of such, who have been left orphans, have generally found friends by whose instrumentality they have not only been preserved from extreme necessity, but have lived in comfort and reputation; and some of them have risen to great prosperity. Such facts afford great encouragement not only to the faith of dying parents, and their bereaved offspring, in the promise of God, who has said, "Leave thy fatherless children with me, I will preserve them alive"—  
but

but great encouragement also to the practice of religion in general.

But the grand motive of all, to approve ourselves the faithful servants of Christ, arises from the assurance of *his* friendship in death, in judgment, and for ever. Though he will not save the most beloved disciple from the arrest of death, nor recover any by miracle, as he did Lazarus, yet all his friends and followers when they die, may rest assured that he will watch over their sleeping dust, and that ere long he will come "to awake them out of sleep," and raise them to an immortal life.

At that day, when the highest earthly connexions will fail, all will need such a friend as Jesus. Oh! the unspeakable felicity of them that shall find a friend in the universal Judge! Then will he "confess their names before his father and "before the holy angels." While all his enemies shall be confounded at his presence, and be sentenced to "depart as accursed," he will introduce *them* to the everlasting mansions which his love had prepared in his father's house, where they shall dwell with him for ever. We read, ch. xii. 2. that at a subsequent visit which Jesus made to Bethany, "Lazarus" was one of them that sat at the table with him." Who can conceive the pleasure which he, who had lately been a prisoner in the grave, must have felt in the society of that friend who had restored him to life! But how much greater will be the joy when all the followers of Christ, being loosed from the bands of death, by his power, shall "sit down with him at his table in his heavenly kingdom!" when at the same time they shall be introduced into the immediate presence of his God and father, who will receive them as the children of his family. "If any man love me," says, our Lord, "my *father* will love him." And he not only promises "where I am, there shall also my servant be," but he adds, "if any man serve me, him will *my father* honour." Ch. xii. 26. In a word, every true disciple  
of



of Christ shall be called, as Abraham was, "*the friend of* " GOD."—Once more,

4. What consolation doth the present subject afford on the death of our Christian friends, and in the prospect of our own!—It is to the great resurrection-day, when " them " that sleep in Jesus God will bring with him," that the gospel particularly directs the views of Christians for comfort on the death of their pious relatives. See *1 Thess.* iv. 13—18. If when our beloved kindred and brethren in Christ, are torn from our society and deposited in the grave, we believed that there was an utter extinction of their being, so that we should never see them more, we might well weep and lament and refuse to be comforted. But since they rather *sleep* than *die*, our grief should be moderate, and it should be mingled with joy. When any of our family, fatigued and indisposed with unusual labour, retire to rest a little before us, we are not much disturbed at their departure, but we cheerfully wish them a good repose. " If they sleep " we hope they will do well," and are pleased with the expectation of seeing them, in the morning, better. Why then should we be overwhelmed with sorrow on account of our friends, who, weary with the burdens and trials of life, are permitted to retire to their resting-place in the grave a little before ourselves? especially if we believe that their spirits are now " present with the Lord," and we hope in the morning of the resurrection to see them again, perfectly well and happy.

Such we doubt not is the blessed change death has made in the case of our departed brother. His life was, for the most part, a life of labour, care, and sorrow. Besides much bodily infirmity and depression of spirit, which had often interrupted his enjoyments and ministerial labours, he had experienced very heavy relative trials, which embittered life to him, and probably contributed to shorten it. He had likewise met with various vicissitudes, and undergone frequent  
removals

removals from place to place, which must have been attended with perplexity and trouble; to *him* greatly aggravated by the peculiar tenderness of his spirit. Why should we regret it that he has made his last remove? that his pilgrimage is over, and that he is entered into rest at an early period? Let those who valued him the most, rather rejoice on his account, that his sorrows are ended. And let them especially rejoice in the prospect of that blessed morning, when they shall see him again to far greater advantage than they ever saw him on earth, and renew a friendship with him which shall never expire.

And let the pleasing view which we have been taking of death serve to reconcile all of us, who have hope in Christ, to the prospect of *our own* dissolution. We know that we must shortly follow our departed friends. Like them we must leave all that is dear on earth behind us, and lie down on the bed of death, never to rise till the heavens be no more. But what is there in this that needs to terrify a true disciple of Jesus? So many are the cares and burdens and sorrows of life, that we should rather rejoice in the thought that we shall "not live always," nor long: that there is a bed of rest provided where we shall soon enjoy sweet repose. But especially, that beyond the grave there remains a perfect everlasting rest in heaven. To the afflicted and aged Christian, more particularly, the thought of sleeping in Jesus should be ever welcome. Of such it might rather be expected that they should "have a desire to depart,"

"And long for evening to undress,  
"That they may rest with God."

To conclude, amidst all the darkness of that approaching night, let our faith be directed to the bright morning which shall succeed: "a morning without clouds," which shall be followed by one eternal day. At that blessed period we and our Christian friends shall awake and rise together, no  
more



more to SLEEP—no more to PART—Parents and children, ministers and people, how painfully or how long soever their delightful intercourse may have been interrupted by the sleep of death (which in fact will appear but as a moment) shall renew their social enjoyments with every possible advantage, and be admitted into the immediate presence of their Saviour and their God. In the prospect of “that great rising day” may the Christian, when falling into his last sleep, adopt the joyous exclamation of the Psalmist, “I shall behold thy face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I AWAKE in thy likeness.”

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### *A brief Account of the Deceased.*

MR. CRABB was born of respectable and pious parents, at *Wattlesfield* in *Suffolk*, where he enjoyed the early instructions of the learned and worthy Mr. *Thomas Harmer*, whom he succeeded in his pastoral charge. He discovered from his childhood a deep sense of religion, and an inclination to the ministerial office. He had his grammar-learning under Mr. *Walker*, then minister at *Framlingham*, where my knowledge of him and esteem for him commenced. His academic studies, which he pursued with uncommon industry, were under the direction of Dr. *Ashworth* at *Daventry*.

His first settlement as a minister was at *Stowmarket*; from whence he removed to *Cirencester*. He was afterwards a short time at *Devizes*, where he assisted his brother-in-law, Mr. *Fenner*, both in his school and in the pulpit, till the death of his venerable pastor seemed to open a pleasing prospect at his native place. But finding his expectations here not fully answered, he was recommended to *Roydon*, with the hope of his  
being

being instrumental, by his prudence and good temper, of preventing a separation which at that time was apprehended. Though this desirable object failed, a part of that respectable congregation manifested so warm an attachment to him, that he accepted their invitation to become their pastor. Nor had he or they any cause to regret this connexion. Though several more worthy persons than was expected withdrew along with those who had determined upon a separate interest, his amiable temper and unexceptionable deportment commanded the esteem of the most respectable characters of all parties in the town and neighbourhood; and from those who adhered to his ministry he experienced increasing testimonies of esteem and affection.

But it was less than four years and a half that they enjoyed the benefit of his ministrations. He first preached to them as a probationer, *July 4, 1790*. His last sermon was on *December 7, 1794*, upon *the blessedness of the watchful servant*. During his short illness (which began with spasmodic affections in his legs) so long as the state of his intellects admitted, he discovered a mind deeply tinctured with piety, a thankful sense of the divine goodness, and a cheerful acquiescence in the divine will.

He has left behind him seven orphans, the youngest of them but two years of age, at whose birth he was deeply afflicted with the loss of his much beloved consort. With a view to their benefit, as well as for the edification of themselves and others, his friends purpose to publish a few of his well-composed sermons; to which will probably be prefixed a more particular account of his life and character.



# FUNERAL ORATION,

DELIVERED AT THE INTERMENT,

BY R. HALL, M. A.

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**A**MONG the many appearances which man presents to the view of a contemplative mind, death is one of the most extraordinary. Whatever be the station he has filled, and however he has conducted himself in it, whether he has adorned it by virtue or degraded it by vice, whether he has passed obscurely through the world, or filled it with the fame of his actions, he soon disappears, and the *place which once knew him knows him no more*. Over all the sons of Adam death hath reigned. The worthy and beneficent are embalmed by the tears of tender but transient regret. The chasm their departure has occasioned in society is filled up by their successors, who tread the same circle of life and death, and thus perpetuate the established order of the universe.

But though the grave terminates the business of life, it does not terminate the inquiries of the living. Whether the whole of existence is comprised within the present life, or whether it be merely a passage into an unseen state, is a question which has engaged the attention of men in every age; nor would it be possible (were it ever so proper) to detail within the limits of this address the various reasonings and conjectures to which it has given occasion. When we contemplate death under its sensible appearances, the destruction of the external organs, and the corruption of the whole mass, we are tempted to regard it as the extinction of being, and to suppose its effects upon the human race are the same as upon the inferior orders of creatures. Whatever has been the object of the senses in both is reduced to putrefaction and dust. But when again we recollect in how many important respects we are distinguished above the brutes, we cannot help indulging higher expectations and looking for a nobler  
D destiny.

destiny. Our superior comprehension of mind qualifies us for a larger duration of being. While the brute is capable of enjoying little more than the present moment, the remembrance of what is past and the anticipation of what is to come, enables us to multiply our resources and to diffuse our existence, if I may so speak, over a larger surface. To compare one state of being with another, to learn wisdom from experience, and to regulate our future expectations by what has already occurred, are employments congenial with the human mind. But, it is evident, that a creature possessed of such faculties will be capable of continually making new acquisitions of knowledge, and of advancing nearer and nearer to perfection.

Among all the tribes of creatures with which we are acquainted, Man is the only one that appears to have any dread of annihilation, or the remotest conception of another state. How shall we account for the universal prevalence of these sentiments, in spite of all the sensible appearances of death, unless they are either the vestige of some early revelation or the incorrupted dictate of nature? How is it that we are the only beings that extend their anxieties beyond the grave; that we are so reluctant to quit the present scene, and that when we are at length compelled to depart we grasp at the very shadow of immortality, and console ourselves with the hope of surviving in the regrets of our friends and the reputation of our actions?

Though there seems to be much plausibility in these topics, it must be confessed, the best arguments for a future state are derived from the moral part of our nature; or, in other words, from our capability of good and ill desert. For since it is plain that God hath made us moral agents, and placed us under a law, we may be assured he has not made us so in vain, but that he will call us to an account for our actions; and as there is no exact distribution of rewards and punishments in this life, we are entitled to expect another suited to the respective characters of men and the moral attributes of the Deity. If after all we consider of actual  
opinions



opinions on this head, we shall find the wisest among the heathen were far from attaining any certainty. When they gave scope to their feelings and their hopes, they sometimes painted the elysian abodes of the virtuous in the warmest colouring of eloquence; in their cooler moments they subsided into scepticism; so that on the whole the idea of a future state seems to have operated not so much as a fixed principle as a vague presentiment.

Revelation can alone boast of having *brought life and immortality to light*. The religion of Jesus Christ places the reality of a future state at the foundation of its truths. It is there so constantly reverted to, so often repeated, and so solemnly enforced, that it has never been by any class of Christians disputed or denied. Nor is the reality only of a future state revealed in Christianity: as far as is consistent with the present limitation of our faculties, it affords us the justest views of its nature; which it makes to consist not in sensual gratifications, or festive bowers, the visions of a Mahometan paradise, but in enjoyments the most suited to the rational and immortal mind; an union with God, the knowledge of his perfections, and the eternal fruition of his love. The information which Christianity imparts on these subjects is not conveyed in dark and symbolical expressions, or in a chain of philosophical reasoning, but in a manner the most perspicuous and popular. With what majestic simplicity does our Lord assure us of the resurrection of the just: *I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which believeth on the Son may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day*. When many of the disciples of our Lord went back and walked no more with him, being offended with the sublime mysteries of his doctrine, he took occasion to ask his twelve apostles, *Will ye also go away?* To which Peter, in the name of them all, made this reply, *Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life*. In this short answer we behold the distinguishing

guishing lustre of Christianity. It explains at once the ground of a rational attachment to it, and will be sufficient to justify its profession from the reproach of folly, however mysterious its doctrines, however arduous its duties, and however painful or costly its sacrifices.

There are two purposes connected with the present solemnity to which the doctrine of immortality ought to be applied; the first regards the regulation of life, the second the inspiring us with fortitude in the contemplation of our own deaths and those of our relatives and friends. If we consider ourselves as candidates for an eternal state of happiness, it becomes us to regard life with all its vicissitudes as a probationary state, and to look upon every thing that is not directly or indirectly conducive to our eternal welfare, foreign to our purpose and undeserving our pursuit. Heavenly-mindedness is in this view as much the dictate of reason as of scripture. It is nothing more than the placing our affections where we expect our felicity; the wisdom of preferring the end to the means, that which is permanent to that which is transitory. Let the men of the world, who disbelieve the declarations of the gospel respecting eternal realities, lead a life, if they please, of dissipation and vice; but for a professor of religion to confine his affections to the earth is equally impious and absurd. Distracted betwixt his inordinate attachment to the present and his apprehension of a future world, his religion, if it will bear that name, must be a constant source of disquietude. He has neither the calmness of insensibility, nor the triumph of faith. His prevailing regard to the interests of the present life renders it impossible for him to set his affections on a better state, while the carnal and reluctant glances he is compelled to take of that state, are sufficient to embitter his enjoyments and disturb his repose.

The misery which persons of this description suffer from an inward conflict between principle and practice, is the chief reason that has induced superficial observers to represent Christianity as a gloomy, melancholy system. There is no other



other foundation for this charge, than that its claims are grand and extensive, that it disdains a compromise with the corrupt attachments of the heart, and that they who will not allow it the dominion of their affections will find it the troubler of their thoughts.

Whoever lives under the habitual influence of those tempers which qualify us for heaven, derives from his view of the eternal world the purest serenity and delight. In the midst of the severest disappointments of human life, secret consolations spring up in his mind, which sometimes swell into rapture, disarm the world of its terrors, and afford him a prelibation of unutterable bliss. In vain will you look elsewhere for true magnanimity, and moral grandeur. It is religion alone which both animates and softens the heart, cherishes sensibility, instills fortitude, and enables us to triumph without extravagance and suffer without dejection.

If the scripture doctrine of immortality is entitled to so much weight in the regulation of LIFE, its influence is not less sovereign in dispelling the terrors of DEATH, and consoling us under the loss of our dearest friends and relatives. *I would not have you be ignorant brethren concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not as others who have no hope: for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; so shall we be ever with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.* And who can fail being penetrated with the divine consolation they afford? If ever Christianity appears in its power, it is when it erects its trophies on the TOMB; when it takes up its votaries where the world leaves them, and fills the breast with immortal hopes in dying moments.

Nor are the words I have quoted adapted to support the mind of a Christian in the view of his *own* dissolution only; they administer the firmest support amidst the breaches which  
death

death is continually making in the church of Christ. A degree of sorrow on such occasions nature compels us to feel, and religion does not condemn. At the decease of Lazarus, while his sisters were lamenting his loss, *Jesus wept*. But the sorrow which a Christian feels in such situations is mingled with hope. By the light of faith he traces his deceased friends into an eternal world. Instead of considering them as lost or extinct, he beholds them still under the eye of Divine Providence. The period of their trial is closed: they have entered into rest, where sheltered from the storms of life, and the dangers of temptation, their happiness is for ever fixed and unalterable. Their separation is neither final nor complete. The pious living and the pious dead are still one family, under one head; and when he *who is their life shall appear, they shall appear together with him in glory*. The friendships which have had virtue and religion for their basis will survive all human ties, out-live the habitable globe, and form in all probability a principal part of the happiness of the blessed.

It is not unusual, I am aware, on occasions like these, to pass high encomiums on the character of the deceased; a mode of proceeding the less requisite in the present instance, as the character of Mr. CRABB was too well established and held in too high esteem to have any thing to hope from praise or to fear from censure. His mild and gentle spirit rendered it nearly impossible for him to have any enemies. The innocence and sanctity of his behaviour, the sensibility of his heart, the fidelity with which he discharged the duties of life, and the equanimity with which he bore its rebukes and sufferings, will leave a lasting impression on the minds of all his friends and acquaintance. You of this church and congregation, have lost a friend, an instructor, a pastor; one who was anxious on every occasion to promote your spiritual and eternal welfare, who knew how to rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep. You, my friends, will long remember, I trust, the affectionate exhortations he addressed to you, and make it appear on the day of solemn  
account



account he has *not laboured in vain, nor spent his strength for nought*. His relation to you as your pastor has ceased; but its effects and consequences will never cease: they will reach into eternity, and *become the savour of life unto life, or of death unto death*. If the duties of the ministerial character appeared so weighty in the eyes of an apostle that he was ready to sink under it, and exclaimed, *Who is sufficient for these things?* you will recollect it was its connexion with the eternal interests of his hearers which rendered his situation so arduous, and his responsibility so awful.

You have now before you one more example of the uncertainty of life. Your deceased friend and pastor was cut off in the midst of his days. His sun, instead of performing the usual circuit, set in its meridian. He no doubt often endeavoured, during his continuance among you, to convince you of the vanity of the world, and the insufficiency of all its enjoyments to render you happy; but Providence determined he should do more; that he should instruct you from the tomb, on these topics, and bring them home to your senses.

Another year is passed away, and you have entered upon a new portion of time\*. The division of time into distinct periods, besides its utility in business and in science, is favourable to moral reflexion. On the entrance on a new year, a contemplative mind will be naturally employed in estimating its acquisitions, comparing its improvements, retracing past occurrences, and revolving future prospects. The giddy and thoughtless feel their attention for a moment fixed, and suspecting all is not right, form some indistinct resolution of repentance and amendment; which they are determined to execute as soon as some present scheme shall be finished, some prevailing passion gratified, or some expected change in their situation shall take place. The present moment seems always attended with inseparable difficulties; but they still flatter themselves with the hopes of some more auspicious period when their minds will be disengaged, their passions

\* This oration was delivered on New-Year's-Day.

composed, and religion assert its power. Thus year rolls on after year, the self-delusion is repeated, and while they are planning new schemes of life, they sink into the grave.

If a hardened contempt of religion has slain its thousands, a feeble and irresolute spirit has slain its ten thousands. Is there none in this assembly who, it is to be feared, are convinced of the importance of religion, and are yet unwilling to pay an immediate attention to it, flattering themselves they shall have ample opportunities of satisfying all its demands?

Vain presumptuous man! hast thou penetrated the councils of the Almighty, or been permitted to read thy destiny, that whilst thou beholdest the ravages of death all around thee, the multitudes which fall at thy right-hand and at thy left, the young and the old, the feeble and the strong hurried into eternity, thou shouldest suppose thyself alone firm and immoveable amidst this flux and succession of being! Wouldst thou wish to surmount the fear of death? Acquaint thyself with him who is the resurrection and the life; with that Saviour who is its author, its revealer, and its pattern. *Take his yoke upon you and learn of him.* Attend to his instructions, and yield yourself up to his guidance. You will then be able to converse familiarly with death. You will feel no terror in the prospect of future judgment, but will wait for its approach, and be able to stand before the Son of God at his coming. *Finally, let us who are of the light and of the day be sober, putting on the breast-plate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation.* Instead of murmuring at such afflictive dispensations as separate us from those we esteem and love, let us employ them as inducements to set our affections on a better world, where we shall shortly join them; remembering that whatever ties of affection are broken by death, are taken from the enjoyments of time to enrich the prospect of eternity.

F I N I S.



A N  
E L E G Y

ON THE LATE

REV. H. CRABB, OF ROYSTON,

BY J. T. R.

*Multis ille quidem flebilis occidit.*—HOR.

“ How did the good, the virtuous mourn,  
“ And pour their sorrows o’er his urn!”

I.

SWEET muse of pity—’tis thy melting strain!  
From the throng’d scenes of busy life I turn,  
To where yon orphans roam, a pensive train,  
Where wounded friendship clasps th’untimely urn.

II.

See how she bends o’er CRABB’s lamented tomb,  
Fall’n in his prime!—She scatters all around  
The short-liv’d hopes (ah! wither’d in their bloom!)  
Of social joys, by truth, by candour crown’d.

III.

His was the praise each gift that nature gave,  
Still to adorn with learning’s studious care;  
Of vain authority no crouching slave,  
No bold assumer of the pedant’s chair.

IV.

His the pure zeal religion’s path to tread;  
The virtuous deed that earn’d; but ask’d not, fame:  
Nor is he number’d with th’unhallow’d dead,  
Nor shall oblivion’s shade involve his name.

E

V. What

## V.

What tho' for him no mausolean pile  
 Proclaim that pride or pomp reposes here;  
 What tho' no venal bard's elegiac style  
 "Implore the passing tribute of a tear?"

## VI.

Yet where the modest stone records his date,  
 Friendship shall oft in musing sadness stray;  
 And oft his life's affecting tale relate,  
 As her slow footsteps press th'unconscious clay.

## VII.

For many a piercing pang he knew to prove,  
 The scorn of pride to meet—the bigot's sneer;  
 To watch the last sad sigh of faithful love,  
 Or filial duty's faltering wish to hear.

## VIII.

Nor seldom did he mourn for human kind,  
 By vice enthral'd, and pow'rs despotic rage:  
 Yet would religion-footh his gen'rous mind,  
 And paint the radiance of her golden age.

## IX.

Blest age! the theme of Judah's hallow'd strain,  
 When truth's bright sun shall rise on ev'ry shore,  
 Virtue with peace divide her equal reign,  
 For rude injustice shall usurp no more.

## X.

And when, the shades of mortal night withdrawn,  
 His tomb shall welcome life's celestial day.  
 The eye that clos'd on truth's just op'ning dawn,  
 Shall meet enraptur'd her meridian day.





